

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS: AG, PINT
SUBJECT: BOUMEDIENE SWORN IN

1. HOUARI BOUMEDIENE, ELECTED PRESIDENT ON DECEMBER 10, TOOK HIS OATH OF OFFICE DECEMBER 16.
2. BOUMEDIENE GAVE NO INAUGURAL SPEECH. IN DECEMBER 15

PRESS CONFERENCE LIMITED TO MEMBERS OF NATIONAL PRESS AND WHICH APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO SUBSTITUTE FOR SUCH AN ADDRESS, BOUMEDIEN MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. SIGNIFICANCE OF SUCCESSIVE REFERENDUMS ON CHARTER, CONSTITUTION, AND PRESIDENT IS THAT ALGERIAN PEOPLE HAVE WITH NO AMBIGUITY MADE FUNDAMENTAL CHOICE TO FOLLOW SOCIALIST LINE; THESE VOTES SIGNIFY "YEST TO THE REVOLUTION".

B. PAST TEN YEARS SAW THE "CONSTRUCTION OF THE STATE"; WITH RECENT ELECTIONS "REVOLUTIONARY LEGITIMACY HAS BEEN REINFORCED BY CONSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY." NEXT STEP WILL BE TO RECTIFY PAST ERRORS: "TO RECOGNIZE ONE'S ERRORS IS A GREAT VIRTUE AND SELF-CRITICISM IS A NECESSITY TO GUARANTEE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN

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THE GOVERNORS AND THE GOVERNED". ALL THE GREAT CHOICES HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE; WHAT COMES NEXT WILL CONCERN "PRACTICAL MEASURES OF APPLICATION".

C. IN REGARD TO POLITICAL PRISONERS, BOUMEDIENE STATED: "I CAN SAY THAT ALGERIAN PRISONS HOLD NO POLITICAL PRISONER. I DEFY ANYONE IN ALGERIA OR ABROAD TO CITE

ME THE NAME OF ONE SINGLE POLITICAL PRISONER IN THE FULL MEANING OF THE TERM. CERTAINLY DURING THE FIRST YEARS (OF THE REVOLUTION) AND UNDER SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES PREVENTIVE MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN CONCERNING CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE EXPLOITED BY THE ENEMIES OF OUR PEOPLE... IN THE FUTURE THE REVOLUTION WILL ADAPT ITS POSITION TOWARDS EACH PERSON IN ACCORD WITH THE ATTITUDE OF THE PERSON TOWARD THE REVOLUTION".

3. PRESIDENCY SUMMONED DIPLOMATIC CORPS DECEMBER 18 TO CONGRATULATE BOUMEDIENE UPON HIS ELECTION. MOST INTRIGUING ASPECT OF CEREMONY WAS PROMINENCE OF BOUTEFLIKA, WHO STOOD BESIDE PRESIDENT IN RECEIVING LINE, WAS CALLED BY PRESIDENT TO BE TELEVISED WITH HIM AND DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND WHO SAID FAREWELL TO EACH ATTENDEE. (IN BRIEF EXCHANGE BOUTEFLIKA ASKED HOW AMBASSADOR PARKER'S CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON WERE GOING AND EXPRESSED THANKS FOR COPY OF PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S BOOK, "WHY NOT THE BEST?", COMMENTING THAT HE HAD READ IT AND FOUND IT "EXTREMELY INTERESTING".) BOUTEFLIKA'S PROMINENCE NATURALLY REINFORCED RUMORS HE DESTINED TO BE EITHER VICE PRESIDENT OR PRIME MINISTER.

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